

ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVES OF MULTIPLE ROLES: WORK TO FAMILY AND FAMILY TO WORK FACILITATION FOR EMPLOYEES AND PARENTS

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Employees occupy multiple roles. Many times, one of the roles is that of a parent. The scarcity theory describes energy for multiple roles as a limited, fixed pie that is detracted from by participation in each role. The enhancement theory describes energy for multiple roles as boundless and ever expanding and that individuals gain energy, skills, and resources from each role that assist them in another role. This experiment tested the idea that messages received about either theory assist persons to develop appraisals of a situation and affect perceptions of how they and others navigate multiple roles. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: enhancement, scarcity, or control. Participants read a news story corresponding to their assigned condition.

Participants who had been presented with a news story describing multiple roles as enhancing reported greater Work Family Facilitation than participants who had been presented with a news story describing multiple roles as depleting. This suggests that when one is provided information about the benefits of multiple roles, one adopts the attitude that work to family facilitation does indeed occur. A one-way ANOVA revealed a significant effect for Work Family Facilitation, $F(2,78) = 5.70$, $p = .005$.

However, participants in the enhancement condition did not report greater Family Work Facilitation than participants in the scarcity or control conditions, $p = .93$. Regarding conflict, participants in the enhancement condition did not report less Work Family Conflict or Family Work Conflict than those in the scarcity or control condition. Participants who were presented a role enhancement message did not report being more committed to multiple roles than participants in the scarcity or control conditions. Though these findings were in conflict with hypotheses, they indicate that the message presented did not have a significant effect on the participants' attitudes toward Family Work Facilitation, Work Family Conflict, Family Work Conflict, or multiple role commitment.

Family Work Facilitation and role commitment were positively correlated. This finding indicates that participants reporting greater levels of Family Work Facilitation also have greater levels of role commitment. Family work facilitation and multiple role commitment were positively correlated ($r = .23$, $p = .048$).

Contrary to the hypotheses, the messages received (enhancement, scarcity, control) did not affect participants' willingness to partner with or their perception of a hypothetical individual with multiple roles. Analyses also showed that the hypothetical individual was not perceived as significantly more unfavorable either.

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